

### Clinton County RESA Office of Innovative Projects

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## Request for Applications for Inclusion Builders - Preschool Inclusion and Equity Support Project

### Statement of Purpose

Michigan is offering a pilot project for intermediate school districts (ISDs) to focus resources on improving inclusion and equity practices in preschool through the utilization of evidence-based instructional practices. All young children with disabilities should have access to high-quality early childhood programs, provided with individualized and appropriate supports to meet high expectations. This initiative is administered by Clinton County Regional Educational Services Agency, Office of Innovative Projects (CCRESA OIP), funded through the federal Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five (PDG B-5), under the direction of the Michigan Department of Education, Office of Great Start (MDE-OGS).

### Background

The need for children with disabilities to be educated to the greatest extent possible with peers in typical settings is a tenet that is strongly supported by both law and research. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires schools to serve the educational needs of students with disabilities in the least restrictive environment (LRE). The only time that a child may be educated outside of a typical environment is when his or her needs, even with supports and accommodations, cannot be met.

Research demonstrates that children with disabilities who have access to, participate in, and are supported in typical settings have improved educational outcomes, possess more positive social-emotional skills and demonstrate better retention of knowledge and skills. Additionally, research has shown that inclusive preschool programs tend to be higher quality environments for all learners. Benefits are noted for all children in the area of social-emotional development.

As part of the strong emphasis on educating preschool children with disabilities in typical educational environments, IDEA calls for each state to set targets for inclusion and report annually on how the state is doing in meeting these targets. Michigan's most recently reported rate of preschool inclusion was **28.24%**, which places Michigan in the bottom 10 states. The average national rate is 45%.

### Eligible Applicants

Intermediate school districts are eligible to apply.

### Scope of Work

Each applicant must develop and implement a written, ISD-wide plan for supporting and promoting inclusive opportunities for preschool-aged children with disabilities. This plan should include the integration of key components of mentoring and practice-based coaching of staff from administration to classroom support staff. This plan should also include hiring and supervising a Preschool Inclusion and

Equity Support Specialist that will work alongside instructional personnel within typical preschool settings to support all learners. Mentoring and practice-based coaching support will be provided to the Preschool Inclusion and Equity Support Specialist through CCRESA OIP. The Preschool Inclusion and Equity Support Specialist will focus on providing individual and group professional learning that will expand and refine the understanding and implementation of research and evidence-based practices that promote preschool inclusion. The Preschool Inclusion and Equity Support Specialist will provide strength-based support that is based on the identified goals and needs of individual staff members and instructional teams.

Successful implementation will require ISD personnel to participate in professional learning of evidence-based instructional practices, such as use of the Inclusive Classroom Profile (ICP) and the Pyramid Model for Supporting Social Emotional Competence in Young Children to help early educators build skills for supporting nurturing and responsive caregiving, create learning environments, provide targeted social-emotional skills, and support children with challenging behavior.

## Outcomes and Performance Measures

Desired Outcomes:

- Develop and implement a written, ISD-wide plan for supporting and promoting inclusive opportunities for preschool-aged children with disabilities that must include (see application form at the end of this document):
  - Training Component
    - Describe how your ISD has participated in or provided professional learning in the Inclusive Classroom Profile, Pyramid Model for Supporting Social Emotional Competence in Young Children, mentoring and coaching, National Conferences, statewide and national training opportunities.
  - Preschool Inclusion and Equity Support Specialist
    - Provide position description for this role that includes general functions, qualifications and requirements, essential duties, outcomes and measures of success, and other required skills.
  - Implementation Component
    - Describe how your ISD will implement the Inclusive Classroom Profile and the Pyramid Model for Supporting Social Emotional Competence in Young Children in classroom settings.
    - Describe how your ISD will ensure that children will have access to equitable learning opportunities.
    - Describe how your ISD will implement embedded instruction in classrooms.
    - Describe strategies for collaborating and teaming that will be used among family members, teachers/assistant teachers, related service providers and administrators.
  - Coaching Component
    - Describe plan for implementing a system of coaching supports for students, parents, teachers, and administrators, including the following:
      - Plan, develop, conduct, and evaluate staff development activities for students, parents, teachers, and administrators that support high quality instructional programs.

- Develop and sustain a continuous improvement process that involves analyzing and synthesizing data to inform decisions.
  - Provide consultation to facilitate team teaching/co-teaching between the special and general education teachers.
  - Establish a peer support system with all classroom staff.
- Leadership Component
  - Describe the capacity and commitment of your organization to provide leadership on this initiative in the following ways; commitment to participate in the Statewide Leadership Team on Inclusion, history of active participation in inclusion related initiatives at the regional or state level, and commitment to participation in the Inclusion Builders Workgroup through the duration of this pilot project.
- Budget
  - Describe financial support for Preschool Inclusion and Equity Support Specialist position in years 2, 3 and beyond.
- Training on practice-based coaching and mentoring will be provided by CCRESA OIP contractor. Implementation of a practice-based coaching and mentoring process that supports all staff involved in the preschool inclusion and equity project.

### Performance Measures:

- Preschool Inclusion and Equity Support Specialist position filled with qualified candidate
  - The Inclusion Support Specialist will possess at a minimum a bachelor's degree in Early Childhood or related field with training and/or field experience in practice-based coaching. Preference given to candidates possessing a master's degree in Curriculum and Instruction or Educational Leadership and those having training in a research or evidence-based coaching model (e.g.: facilitative, instructional, collaborative, consultative and/or transformational). Additional requirements include:
    - Five years successful instructional experience in a preschool setting with preference given to candidates who have teaching experience and in providing instruction in an inclusive setting,
    - Strong content knowledge in the history, data and practices related to preschool inclusion,
    - Demonstrated history of building collaborative professional relationships with adult learners and experience in developing structures to support the competencies of various stakeholders,
    - Preference given to candidates with experience in developing/facilitating professional learning and developing procedures to sustain learning through professional learning communities, classroom learning labs, and/or other forms of collaboration,
    - Implementation experience with evidence-based models for systems support, such as Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS), including Positive Behavioral Intervention Supports (PBIS) for preschool settings preferred.
    - Knowledge of and experience in continuous improvement cycle implementation.

- Training component completed and implemented
- Implementation component completed and implemented
- Coaching cycle key components in place
- Attendance at Inclusion Builders Workgroup meetings
- Ongoing engagement in program evaluation that includes the collection and analysis of classroom, school level, and district level data as part of a comprehensive, ongoing program evaluation process.

## Milestones, Deliverables, and Timeline

### Program Milestones:

- Participation in all Inclusion Builders Workgroup meetings, State-level inclusion meetings.
- Preschool Inclusion and Equity Support Specialist starts by December 2020.
- Attends Training & Technical Assistance meetings, Pyramid Model for Supporting Social Emotional Competence in Young Children Trainings, the Early Childhood Inclusion Institute, and other opportunities as available.

### Program Deliverables:

- Submission of all budgets, progress reports, and data in accordance with project timelines.

## Application Procedure

See application form at the end of this document. Applications will be scored by a review committee utilizing the following rubric.

<b>Not Recommended for Funding (0 points per box)</b>	<b>Recommended for Funding with Revisions (1 point per box)</b>	<b>Recommended for Funding (3 points per box)</b>	<b>Highly Recommended for Funding (5 points per box)</b>
Does not have a training component	Has a training component but doesn't include all required components - has no staff training in the ICP to date.	Contains three of the five components (ICP, Pyramid Model, mentoring and coaching, National Conferences, Statewide professional learning opportunities)	Contains all of the elements required for a successful training component in this project (ICP, Pyramid Model, mentoring and coaching, National Conferences, Statewide professional learning opportunities)

<b>Not Recommended for Funding (0 points per box)</b>	<b>Recommended for Funding with Revisions (1 point per box)</b>	<b>Recommended for Funding (3 points per box)</b>	<b>Highly Recommended for Funding (5 points per box)</b>
Does not have an adequate job description for the Preschool Inclusion and Equity Support Specialist	Has a job description for the Preschool Inclusion and Equity Support Specialist but required components are not included.	Contains a job description four of the seven required components for the Preschool Inclusion and Equity Support Specialist position (general functions, qualification & requirements, essential duties, outcomes/measure of success, relationships and other duties, other required skills).	Contains all of the required components for a job description of the Preschool Inclusion and Equity Support Specialist position (general functions, qualification & requirements, essential duties, outcomes/measure of success, relationships and other duties, other required skills).
Does not include an adequate implementation plan and does not articulate objectives that are connected to determining the success of the project.	Has an implementation plan but lacks many of the required components. Plan provides objectives, some of which are measurable, or objectives are not provided for the entire scope of the project.	Contains an implementation plan with some of the required components but is not complete. Plan includes some objectives that will assist in determining the success of the project.	Complete Implementation plan, with all required components, with clear, attainable, measurable objectives against which progress and success of the project will be measured.
Does not include an adequate coaching cycle.	Has a coaching cycle but lacks many of the required components.	Contains a coaching cycle with two of the four components.	Complete Coaching cycle with four required components.
The leadership component does not provide information that allows one to determine that the applicant has adequate leadership in place to successfully implement this project.	Contains one of the leadership components. Applicant has not been involved in the Inclusion Builders Workgroup.	Leadership team member(s) have been involved in the Inclusion Builders Workgroup for the last year.	Contains all three of the leadership components. Leadership team member(s) have been involved in the Inclusion Builders Workgroup for the last year.

<b>Not Recommended for Funding (0 points per box)</b>	<b>Recommended for Funding with Revisions (1 point per box)</b>	<b>Recommended for Funding (3 points per box)</b>	<b>Highly Recommended for Funding (5 points per box)</b>
Does not include a budget with sufficient financial support for years 2 through 4.	Provides a partial budget with some financial support in year 2.	Provides a complete budget with some financial support in year 2 and 3.	Provides complete budget with financial support in years 2 through 4.

### Payments, Incentives, and Penalties

Support for Inclusion and Equity plan:

Up to 10% is allowable for administrative costs.

<b>Award Years</b>	<b>PDG Funding Commitment</b>	<b>ISD Commitment</b>	<b>CCRESA OIP Commitment</b>
Oct 2020-June 2021	1.0 FTE* (\$68,656.35)	administrative support	Training and Technical Assistance support Support to attend National Conferences and statewide professional learning opportunities as allowed by PDG funds
July 2021- June 2022	0.75 FTE* (\$68,656.35)	.25 FTE + administrative support	Training and Technical Assistance support Support to attend National Conferences and statewide professional learning opportunities as allowed by PDG funds
July 2022 - Dec 2022	.50 FTE* (\$22,885.45)	.50 FTE + administrative support	Training and Technical Assistance support
beyond	0 FTE	1.0 FTE + administrative support	Training and Technical Assistance support

\*Contingent on funding from the PDG Birth-5 Grant by US Health and Human Services and Michigan Department of Education

### Contractual Terms and Conditions

#### Assurance Regarding Compliance with Grant Program Requirements

Through submission of an application, ISDs awarded funds under this RFP certify agreement to comply with all applicable requirements of all state statutes, federal laws, executive orders, regulations, policies,

and award conditions governing this program. Awardees understand and agree that if they materially fails to comply with the terms and conditions of the award, CCRESA may withhold funds otherwise due from this program, until the recipient comes into compliance or the matter has been adjudicated and the amount disallowed has been recaptured (forfeited). CCRESA may withhold up to 100 percent of any payment based on a monitoring finding, audit finding or pending final report.

### Certification Regarding Nondiscrimination Under Federally and State Assisted Programs

The applicant hereby agrees that it will comply with all federal and Michigan laws and regulations prohibiting discrimination and, in accordance therewith, no person, on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin or ancestry, age, sex, marital status or handicap, shall be discriminated against, excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination in any program or activity for which it is responsible or for which it receives financial assistance from the U.S. Department of Education or the Michigan Department of Education.

### Specific Program Assurances

Applicants certify that they will comply with the following Federal Health and Human Services regulatory requirements:

- Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirement for HHS Awards (45 CFR Part 75) - [Part 75—Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for HHS Awards](https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/retrieveECFR?gp=1&SID=df3c54728d090168d3b2e780a6f6ca7c&ty=HTML&h=L&mc=true&n=pt45.1.75&r=PART) (<https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/retrieveECFR?gp=1&SID=df3c54728d090168d3b2e780a6f6ca7c&ty=HTML&h=L&mc=true&n=pt45.1.75&r=PART>)
- Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (2 CFR Part 200) – [Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards](https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/retrieveECFR?gp=1&SID=02748a1e7fab41711ba2b063bc8eb05&ty=HTML&h=L&mc=true&n=pt2.1.200&r=PART) (<https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/retrieveECFR?gp=1&SID=02748a1e7fab41711ba2b063bc8eb05&ty=HTML&h=L&mc=true&n=pt2.1.200&r=PART>)

Should an award be made, the following provisions are understood to be true:

1. This project is supported by the Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five Initiative (PDG B-5), Grant Number 90TP0055 from the Office of Child Care, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.
2. The award is approved for the applicant and is not assignable to a third party without specific approval.
3. CCRESA is not liable for any costs incurred by the awardee prior to the issuance of the award.
4. Payments, records, and financial statements made to sites under the provisions of this program will be made accessible and are subject to audit by CCRESA.
5. Each ISD, in collaboration with its sites shall comply with all reporting requirements and due dates.

### Award Availability, Force Majeure and Contract or Award Cancellation

Awards made under this agreement are subject to funding allocation and availability under Grant Number 90TP0055 from the Office of Child Care, Administration for Children and Families, U.S.

Department of Health and Human Services and the Michigan Department of Education fiscal year 2021 and 2022 appropriations.

The performance of an award or agreement by either party shall be subject to force majeure, including but not limited to acts of God, fire, flood, natural disaster, war or threat of war, acts or threats of terrorism, civil disorder, unauthorized strikes, governmental regulation or advisory, recognized health threats as determined by the World Health Organization, the Centers for Disease Control, or local government authority or health agencies (including but not limited to the health threats of COVID-19, H1N1, or similar infectious diseases), curtailment of facilities, or other similar occurrence beyond the control of the parties, where any of those factors, circumstances, situations, or conditions or similar ones prevent, dissuade, or unreasonably delay the terms of the award or ensuring agreement. The award or agreement may be cancelled by either party, without liability, damages, fees, or penalty, for any one or more of the above reasons, by written notice to the other party.

### Format of Response

A webinar relating to this RFP will be held at 1:00 PM EST on Wednesday, September 16, 2020. Please [register at this link](https://eotta.ccrea.org/Event.php?id=3849) (https://eotta.ccrea.org/Event.php?id=3849). A recording will be made available for those who are unable to attend.

Full RFP responses must be received by CCRESA no later than 4:00 PM on October 6, 2020. Responses should be emailed in a single PDF document to [holmberg\\_k@ccresa.org](mailto:holmberg_k@ccresa.org).

Required RFP response elements include:

1. Cover letter
2. Completed Application

### Evaluation and Awards

- Announcements of pilot sites will be made by November 3, 2020.
- Preschool Inclusion and Equity Support Project Application
- Background Information
- ISD Name
- ISD Application Point of Contact
- ISD Address
- Statement of Interest
- Please provide a statement of your interest, including understanding of the goals and scope of work of this project.
- ISD Program Plan Information
- In the following sections, please provide your ISD plan to improve inclusive opportunities for children with disabilities.
- Training. Please describe how your ISD has participated in or provided professional learning in the following areas regarding support for inclusive practices.
- Inclusive Classroom Profile - please include if staff are trained or plan to attend training in the future.
- Pyramid Model for Supporting Social Emotional Competence in Young Children - please include if staff are trained or plan to attend training in the future.
- Mentoring and Coaching component



- Attendance at National Conferences and training opportunities
- Attendance at statewide opportunities for professional learning
- Preschool Inclusion and Equity Support Specialist position. Please attach a position description for this role, including the following required components:
  - General functions
  - Qualification & Requirements
  - Essential duties
  - Outcomes/measure of success
  - Relationships and other duties
  - Other required skills
- Implementation. Please describe how your ISD will implement the following activities through December 2022.
  - How will the ICP be used?
  - How will the Pyramid Model be implemented?
  - How will all children have access to equitable learning opportunities to help them achieve their full potential as engaged learners and valued members of society?
  - How will embedded instruction be implemented, instead of removing a child from the classroom for service?
  - What strategies for collaborating and teaming will be used—among family members, teachers/assistant teachers, related service providers and administrators?
- Coaching. Please describe your plan for implementing a system of coaching supports for students, parents, teachers, and administrators, including the following:
  - Plan, develop, conduct, and evaluate staff development activities for students, parents, teachers, and administrators that support high quality instructional programs.
  - Develop and sustain a continuous improvement process that involves analyzing and synthesizing data to inform decisions.
  - Provide consultation to facilitate team teaching/co-teaching between the special and general education teachers.
  - Establish a peer support system with all classroom staff.
- Leadership. Please describe the capacity and commitment of your organization to provide leadership on this initiative in the following ways:
  - Commitment to participate in the Statewide Leadership Team on Inclusion.
  - History of active participation in inclusion related initiatives at the regional or state level.
  - Commitment to participation in the Inclusion Builders Workgroup through the duration of this pilot project.
- Budget for Preschool Inclusion and Equity Specialist position
- Demonstrating financial support for Preschool Inclusion and Equity Support Specialist position in years 2, 3 and beyond.